

# **EVANGELISTS** M A G A Z I N E

*Issue 10 March - May 2012*

## **It's Harvest Time**



**Ministry Profile**

**Ray Comfort &  
The Living Waters Story**

**From Pearl Harbour to Calvary**

**The powerful testimony of Mitsuo Fuchida**



## THE EVANGELISTS MAGAZINE

(A Soldiers of the Cross Inc. publication)  
Issue 10 March - May 2012

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### SOTC Aims:

Soldiers of the Cross, founded by Tim  
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evangelising the lost and seeing the  
church become the mighty, mature and  
fully-functioning army of God it is meant  
to be, in a war that has already been  
won through Christ's atoning death and  
resurrection.

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Soldiers of the Cross

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Welcome to another issue of TEM. When we made the decision to produce this magazine our position before the Lord was 'Lord, if this is of you, then your blessing will be upon it.' Since issue 1 (formerly called Soldiers of the Cross) we have trusted that if the Lord is in this, then He will provide so that we can produce it.

Our testimony has been that the Lord has provided for every issue, including the postage costs. In fact, every need we have for the magazine is brought before the Lord in prayer, as it is He that is our patron.

In all of this it gives us much to boast, but not of ourselves, for many times we are weak but as the Psalmist says, *"In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name forever. Selah"* Psalm 44:8

Here in lies the essence of the Gospel. That at one time we were weak, unable to save ourselves.

*"For what the laws could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* Romans 8:3

The only one we can boast in is God because salvation is a gift granted to those who come humbly to Him.

*"For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."* Ephesians 2:8-9

This fact that we cannot commend ourselves to God through our own works was best simply penned in the words of that great hymn 'Rock of Ages'.

*"Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to the cross I cling."*

We have had some good feedback from the last issue, and we are particularly pleased

to hear that people have been watching the '180 movie' as a result of our feature article. See the **Evangelism Resources** on *page 11* for more ways to spread the '180' message around.

In this issue, our feature article on *page 4*, **'It's Harvest Time'** reminds us of the words of Jesus to pray for labourers to go out into the harvest field. The field is the world and the harvest is the lost. Compassion, as a driving force, will move us to act on Jesus' words.

On *page 8*, we have the testimony of a man whose actions, just over seventy years ago, will be forever etched into the mind of human history. What is lesser known however, is the life changing encounter this man had when he met Christ.

For those who have been reading TEM over the last year or so, you will be familiar with some of the evangelism resources that we personally use and promote through these pages.

Read on *page 12* about the man, and the ministry he started, that produces these resources. From humble beginnings in New Zealand to California in the USA, evangelist Ray Comfort has, over the last forty years since becoming a Christian, been an instrument of reconciliation wherever he goes.

Talking about being an instrument, our back page article **'Living in Harmony'** reminds us of the importance of being, as the scriptures say, of one heart and one mind. (Acts 4:32)

If you are one of our readers who has picked this magazine up through one of the various Christian bookshops that we send TEM to, why not consider a free subscription (*page 11*). That way you can have it delivered right to your mailbox.

Until next time.





## Reader's Letters

If you have been encouraged by this magazine, or have a testimony to share of how God is using you in His harvest field, please let us know, that others may also be encouraged. Write or email us at the contact details on page 2.

### TEM impacting around the world

I am so glad to have this humble privilege to write back to you. I was somehow remote and far from Nairobi city for an outreach evangelism missions. It was so glorious as almost 20 folks got saved.

Don't know whether you've produced other magazines for last month, please would be glad to have some since they are of great effect and impact in reaching the lost for Christ. They have helped me to present the Gospel in a simple way without struggling, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. God bless my friend for this impact you are making around the world through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Way of the Master. I hold you in prayers that God will continue opening many doors and even bring us across.

**Pastor Nicholas Onyango**  
Kenya

**Got a passion to reach the lost?**

**Not sure what to say?**

**Let us help you.**

We, at Soldiers of the Cross, can facilitate Evangelism Courses in your community (Australia only).

To receive a free information package or for further information, please contact us.

Contact details on page 2.

### Building relationships

We are looking forward to building up a long lasting relationship with you and your ministry. It will be a great blessing for us to partner with you His glory. Please pray for this Godly vision and join hands with us to see this Muslim nation being transformed by Prince of Peace, Jesus.

**Najeeb Ishtiaq**  
Pakistan

### Thank you for mag

Thank you for your magazine and your faithfulness in producing it.

**Ruth Hennessy**  
Mount Ophir, VIC

### Enjoyed last mag

I really like your last mag...thank you for sending it.

**Jo Muir**  
Kandos, NSW

### Touched by ministry

When I went through your web I was touched by your ministry and feel that you can be of help to our ministry in many ways.

**Ps Pius Masikana**  
Kenya

### Glad for the magazine

I am happy to receive a wonderful reply from you and thank you for the introduction to your ministry. So glad also for the magazine, I wish you to continue sending every volume published.

**Nkuba Davies Chola**  
Zambia

### TEM passed to others

Thank you for the outreach in sending The Evangelists Magazine. I keep a copy and distribute through my KYB group and the local Uniting Church.

**Sharon Thompson**  
Waikerie, SA

### Correction

Our letters page last issue should have stated that Johnstone Malinda was from Kenya not Zambia. Apologies for the error.

### Help appreciated in reaching the lost in India

I have sincerely been working for the Glory of God with the dying souls for Christ in my region and all other places around my state and other states, HOLY SPIRIT Power Fire Ministries working for reaching unreached and save dying and lost.

I have a great desire to reach many precious souls who are dying without salvation, those are precious to God, I have a plan to reach many more souls for Christ Jesus, I am distributing tracts in busy places, and my strong desire is to reach the unknown souls for Christ, my motto is save lost and dying souls.

I need your prayers - the Bible says the prayer of the Righteous is powerful and effective. And I believe that I have to meet all my visions and plans for this year to reach many souls for Christ. I want to inform you that if you are inspired by the Lord in your heart your helping hands are highly appreciated and you will never be forgotten in our fervent prayers for the blessings to flow and pour out on you all.

**Pastor G. Kranti Kumar**  
India





# It's Har

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## ◆ Tim Knowling

“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.” Matthew 9:36-38

The priority of winning the lost to Christ should be evident to all who belong to His Church, and does not need to be stressed within these pages. It was His commission to the church.

However much of the church would appear to be in a state of comatose when it comes to reaching the lost. Statistically it is said about 2% of believers actively share their faith. Why is this so? If we are honest with ourselves we will admit that it's a lot easier talking to God about men, than talking to men about God. Many an experienced evangelist has had to battle fear, and who hasn't thought about the consequences of sharing their faith with an unsaved loved one.

In the text above we see some of the keys that will not only unlock the door, but empower us to be truly effective witnesses for our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Compassion the key

On seeing the great multitudes Jesus was moved with compassion; and it is this same compassion that He had, that must be in us, or all evangelistic efforts will be in vain. Whilst I support and endorse programs and resources that are there for the equipping of the church to undertake this most necessary task, we must be moved with compassion to the plight of those who are perishing.

A question I have had to ask myself is, 'Do I really love the lost?' Because if we love the lost, compassion for the lost will follow. Compassion we can say is rooted in Love. Without love we wouldn't have a



# vest Time

Gospel, because God so loved the world that He gave His son (John 3:16). Without God's compassion for this lost world, we wouldn't have a Saviour and without a Saviour, man would be eternally damned.

If you read about some of the great men and woman of faith who have gone before us, you will see that they were, like Christ, moved with compassion.

It is said that George Whitefield, who left England to preach in the United States, stood on Boston Commons speaking to twenty thousand people and he said, "*Listen sinners – you're monsters, monsters of iniquity! You deserve Hell! And the worst of your crimes is that criminals though*

*you've been, you haven't had the good grace to see it!"*

He said, "*If you will not weep for your sins and your crimes against a Holy God, George Whitefield will weep for you!"* That man put his head back and sobbed like a baby.<sup>1</sup>

What is it that will make a man weep for the lost, except compassion? Compassion will move us to action and we see this in Jesus' statement that followed.

## Identifying the need

*"The harvest is plenteous but the labourers are few."* Matthew 9:37

Jesus people He also tudes in our sees the nations is that they be

China, with a popula- more than 1.3 billion India, with a population 1.2 billion souls are great harvest fields waiting to be reaped. And let us not forget Africa, the home of over 1 billion people who are also waiting to be gathered in. The fact that people have been toiling in these nations for the Gospel's sake is noth-

saw the multitudes of - this is the harvest! sees the multi-day and age. He and His heart gathered in.

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ing new. Hudson Taylor, the British missionary who founded the China Inland Mission (CIM), spent 51 years evangelising the people of China. Regarding India, according to history and tradition, Thomas the Apostle sailed there in 52 AD and paved the way for the spread of the Gospel in that nation.

So what of our own countries, those of us who live in western nations - our large cities are teeming with people. Then there are the lesser inhabited rural areas where people are more scattered. The Lord's desire is that they also would hear the Good News that He has given His church to proclaim.

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**“The Lord's desire is that they also would hear the Good News that He has given His Church to proclaim”**

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I spent many years travelling the nation of Australia as part of a Tent mission, going to not only the cities, but the small rural towns and communities to preach the Gospel to all whom the Lord would bring to us. But we were few in number. And that is what I believe the Lord was try-

ing to communicate in this passage. Sure there are labourers out in the Gospel harvest field, but they are few in number.

### Directing our prayer

What is the Lord's desire and His plan then? He told the disciples and He is telling us in this day to *“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”*

Notice that He doesn't ask us to pray that God would sovereignly work a miracle and people would be saved, though He is quite capable and able to do so and has done so throughout the ages.

Specific instructions were given as to what to pray for and it was this - that He will send forth labourers into the harvest field. He is the Lord of the harvest and as such chooses those whom He will send.

Just as He chose Elisha, who was plowing with the oxen in the field, and the disciples who were tending their fishing nets, He chooses those that He will send into His harvest field.

I remember one time when directing the Tent Evangelism team that my wife and I were leading, I was encouraging them on this very point - that God is looking for faithful labourers. One of the team took exception to this, not liking the term 'labourer' for those who were engaged in this work. These, however, are the Lord's words, not mine and I believe He knows far better than we do exactly what He is looking for when choosing people.

I believe the following commentary, by the

late David Wilkerson, sheds light on exactly what God is looking for.

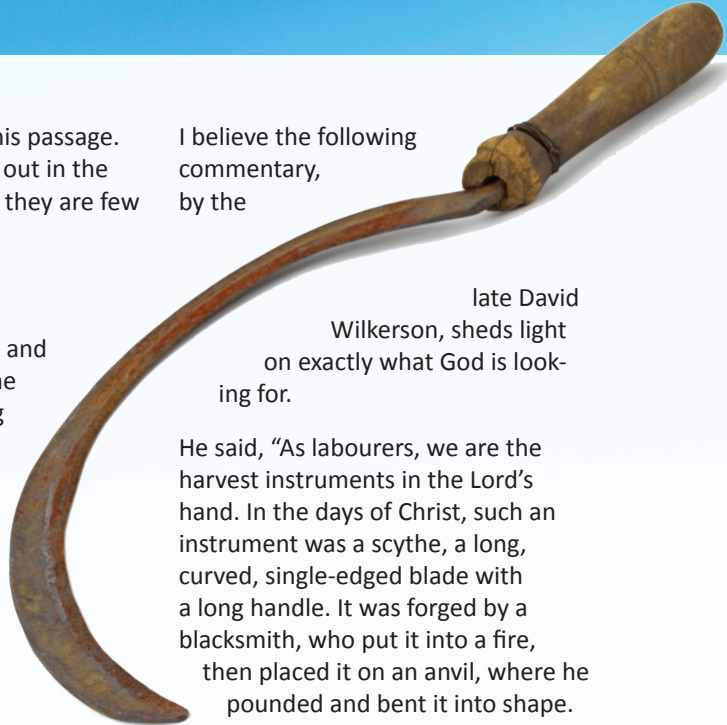
He said, “As labourers, we are the harvest instruments in the Lord's hand. In the days of Christ, such an instrument was a scythe, a long, curved, single-edged blade with a long handle. It was forged by a blacksmith, who put it into a fire, then placed it on an anvil, where he pounded and bent it into shape. Then the whole process was repeated again and again, until the cutting edge was filed with a rough-edged surface.

“The parallel is clear: God is forging labourers. He isn't just pounding away at sin. This forging process explains why the labourers are few. The majority of church-goers are like the thousands who volunteered to go with Gideon in the Old Testament. God saw fear in many of them, knowing they wouldn't endure the fire, the pounding, the hard times. And out of the thousands who followed Gideon, only three hundred were chosen.

“The same thing happens today. Those who are truly called to harvest are called to endure the refining, shaping fires and the continual hammering. Yet not many do.”<sup>2</sup>

Jesus also had His share of knock backs, people whom He called, but were unwilling to obey His command to come and follow Him. They, unlike Elisha and some of the 12 Disciples, were unwilling to give up their plows and nets and walk in obedience to Christ's calling.

*“And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.*





*Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Luke 9:57-62*

The fact that there are some who have been called, but failed to take up the calling, does not change us, nor should it discourage us, from heeding the Lord’s call to pray for Gospel labourers. Indeed we can be encouraged, for just as Jesus told the disciples to pray we see that the Lord answered in a most wonderful way.

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*“God is forging labourers. He isn’t just pounding away at sin. And this forging process explains why the labourers are few.”*

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### **Fulfilling the promise**

In the following chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, we read it was the very 12 disciples that He had spoken to in the preceding chapter, that He sent out. He gave them power to preach and to cast out sickness and disease and evil spirits.

The challenge for us in our time and generation is, will we follow the Lord’s admonition to pray to the Lord of the Harvest for more Gospel labourers?

We may find that just as with the 12, that the Holy Spirit will whisper in our ears *“I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth*

*fruit”* (John 15:16). The Lord may say words to the effect of, *‘You are praying for people to go into the mission field and you are the very person I am looking for’.*

I know personally how this feels, for there was a time when I was a Christian in name only. But when I surrendered my life to His Lordship, I knew that meant that my life was no longer my own, He was in charge and I had to decide whether I would be obedient to Him. I remember being challenged by this text we have been examining and coming to a place within myself, where I realized there was a part of me that wasn’t willing to go if He should call. I prayed a simple prayer that came from an honest heart, *‘Lord I’m willing to be made willing’.* In other words, *‘God, I give you permission to change my heart and bring me to a place where, if you call, I’ll simply say ‘Yes, Lord’.*

You may be reading this article and have sensed the Spirit of God tugging at you; it may be something that He has been trying to get your attention with for a number of years. You may feel like Moses did when God called him, a man who wasn’t a good speaker.

Consider Paul’s words: *“Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and*

*things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not... that no flesh should glory in his presence”* 1 Corinthians 1:26–29.

The testimony of scripture is that as we go in obedience to Him (God) He will be with us (Hebrews 13:5); that He will empower us to be His spokesmen (Acts 1:8); and that the message we bring has the power to change lives. (Romans 1:16)

The question remains - are we available?

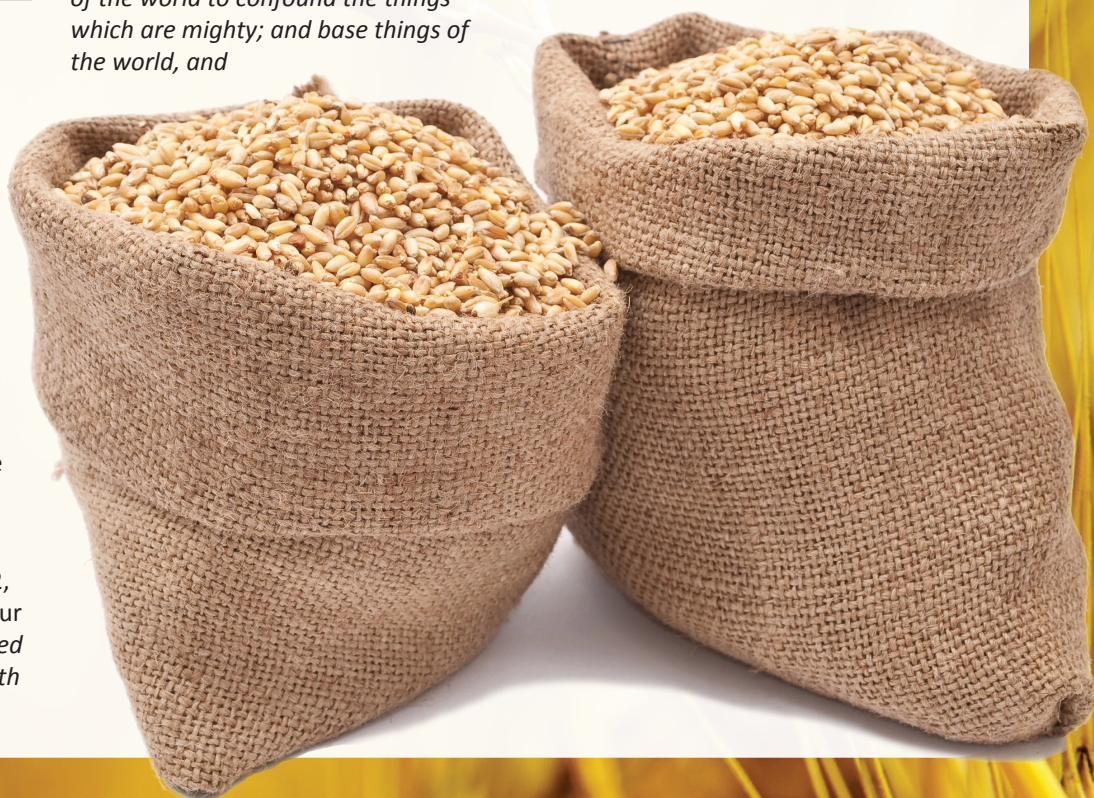
### **References**

1. Sermon ‘Ten Shekels and a Shirt’ P. Reidhead
2. Sermon ‘It’s Harvest Time’ David Wilkerson, World Challenge.

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*“I prayed a simple prayer that came from an honest heart, ‘Lord I’m willing to be made willing.’”*

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# From Pearl Har

I must admit I was more excited than usual as I awoke that morning at 3:00 a.m., Hawaii time, four days past my thirty-ninth birthday. Our six aircraft carriers were positioned 230 miles north of Oahu Island. As general commander of the air squadron, I made last-minute checks on the intelligence information reports in the operations room before going to warm up my single-engine, three-seater "97-type" plane used for level bombing and torpedo flying.

The sunrise in the east was magnificent above the white clouds as I led 360 planes towards Hawaii at an altitude of 3,000 meters. I knew my objective: to surprise and cripple the American naval force in the Pacific. But I fretted about being thwarted should some of the U.S. battleships not be there. I gave no thought of the possibility of this attack breaking open a mortal confrontation with the United States. I was only concerned about making a military success.

As we neared the Hawaiian Islands that bright Sunday morning, I made a preliminary check of the harbor, nearby Hickam Field and the other installations surrounding Honolulu. Viewing the entire American Pacific Fleet peacefully at anchor in the inlet below, I smiled as I reached for the mike and ordered, "All squadrons, plunge in to attack!" The time was 7:49 a.m.

Like a hurricane out of nowhere, my torpedo planes, dive bombers and fighters struck suddenly with indescribable fury. As smoke began to billow and the proud battleships, one by one, started tilting, my heart was almost ablaze with joy. During the next three hours, I directly commanded the fifty level bombers as they pelted not only Pearl Harbor, but the airfields, barracks and dry docks nearby. Then I circled at a higher altitude to accurately assess the damage and report it to my superiors.

Of the eight battleships in the harbor,

five were mauled into total inactivity for the time being. The Arizona was scrapped for good; the Oklahoma, California and West Virginia were sunk. The Nevada was beached in a sinking condition; only the Pennsylvania, Maryland and Tennessee were able to be repaired. Of the eight, the California, West Virginia and Nevada were salvaged much later, but the Oklahoma, after being raised, was resunk as worthless. Other smaller ships were damaged, but the sting of 3,077 U.S. Navy personnel killed or missing and 876 wounded, plus 226 Army killed and 396 wounded, was something which could never be repaired.

It was the most thrilling exploit of my career. Ever since I had heard of my country's winning the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, I had dreamed of becoming an admiral like Admiral Togo, our commander-in-chief in the decisive Battle of the Japan Sea.

Because my father was a primary school







# hour

principal and a very patriotic nationalist, I was able to enroll in the Naval Academy when I was eighteen. Upon graduation three years later, I joined the Japanese Naval Air Force, and served mostly as an aircraft carrier pilot for the next fifteen years. So when the time came to choose the chief commander for the Pearl Harbor mission, I had logged over 10,000 hours, making me the most experienced pilot in the Japanese Navy.

During the next four years, I was determined to improve upon my Pearl Harbor feat. I saw action in the Solomon Islands, Java, the Indian Ocean; just before the Battle of Midway on June 4, 1942, I came down with an attack of appendicitis and was unable to fly. Lying in my bed, I grimaced at the sounds of the firing all about me. By the end of that day, we had suffered our first major defeat, losing ten warships altogether.

From that time on, things got worse. I did not want to surrender. I would rather

have fought to the last man. However, when the Emperor announced that we would surrender, I acquiesced.

I was in Hiroshima the day before the atom bomb was dropped, attending a week long military conference with the Army. Fortunately, I received a long distance call from my Navy Headquarters, asking me to return to Tokyo.

With the end of the war, my military career was over, since all Japanese forces were disbanded. I returned to my home village near Osaka and began farming, but it was a discouraging life. I became more and more unhappy, especially when the war crime trials opened in Tokyo. Though I was never accused, Gen. Douglas MacArthur summoned me to testify on several occasions.

As I got off the train one day in Tokyo's Shibuya Station, I saw an American distributing literature. When I passed him, he handed me a pamphlet entitled *I Was a Prisoner of Japan* (published by Bible

Literature International, known then as the Bible Meditation League). Involved right then with the trials on atrocities committed against war prisoners, I took it.

What I read was the fascinating episode which eventually changed my life. On that Sunday while I was in the air over Pearl Harbor, an American soldier named Jake DeShazer had been on K.P. duty in an Army camp in California. When the radio announced the sneak demolishing of Pearl Harbor, he hurled a potato at the wall and shouted, "Jap, just wait and see what we'll do to you!"

One month later he volunteered for a secret mission with the Jimmy Doolittle Squadron -- a surprise raid on Tokyo from the carrier Hornet. On April 18, 1942, DeShazer was one of the bombardiers, and was filled with elation at getting his revenge. After the bombing raid, they flew on towards China, but ran out of fuel and were forced to para-



# To Calvary

## The powerful testimony of Mitsuo Fuchida





chute into Japanese-held territory. The next morning, DeShazer found himself a prisoner of Japan.

During the next forty long months in confinement, DeShazer was cruelly treated. He recalls that his violent hatred for the maltreating Japanese guards almost drove him insane at one point. But after twenty-five months there in Nanking, China, the U.S. prisoners were given a Bible to read. DeShazer, not being an officer, had to let the others use it first. Finally, it came his turn -- for three weeks. There in the Japanese P.O.W. camp, he read and read and eventually came to understand that the book was more than an historical classic. Its message became relevant to him right there in his cell.

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***“I understood the meaning of His death as a substitute for my wickedness.”***

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The dynamic power of Christ which Jake DeShazer accepted into his life changed his entire attitude toward his captors. His hatred turned to love and concern, and he resolved that should his country win the war and he be liberated, he would someday return to Japan to introduce others to this life-changing book.

DeShazer did just that. After some training at Seattle Pacific College, he returned to Japan as a missionary. And his story, printed in pamphlet form, was something I could not explain.

Neither could I forget it. The peaceful motivation I had read about was exactly what I was seeking. Since the American had found it in the Bible, I decided to purchase one myself, despite my traditionally Buddhist heritage.

In the ensuing weeks, I read this book eagerly. I came to the climactic drama -- the Crucifixion. I read in Luke 23:34 the prayer of Jesus Christ at His death: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” I

was impressed that I was certainly one of those for whom He had prayed. The many men I had killed had been slaughtered in the name of patriotism, for I did not understand the love which Christ wishes to implant within every heart.

Right at that moment, I seemed to meet Jesus for the first time. I understood the meaning of His death as a substitute for my wickedness, and so in prayer, I requested Him to forgive my sins and change me from a bitter, disillusioned ex-pilot into a well-balanced Christian with purpose in living.

That date, April 14, 1950 -- became the second “day to remember” of my life. On that day, I became a new person. My complete view on life was changed by the intervention of the Christ I had always hated and ignored before. Soon other friends beyond my close family learned of my decision to be a follower of Christ, and they could hardly understand it.

Big headlines appeared in the papers: “Pearl Harbor Hero Converts to Christianity.” Old war buddies came to visit me, trying to persuade me to discard “this crazy idea.” Others accused me of being an opportunist, embracing Christianity only for how it might impress our American victors.

But time has proven them wrong. As an evangelist, I have travelled across Japan and the Orient introducing others to the One Who changed my life. I believe with all my heart that those who will direct Japan -- and all other nations -- in the decades to come must not ignore the message of Jesus Christ. Youth must realize that He is the only hope for this troubled world.

Though my country has the highest literacy rate in the world, education has

not brought salvation. Peace and freedom -- both national and personal -- come only through an encounter with Jesus Christ.

I would give anything to retract my actions of twenty-nine years ago at Pearl Harbor, but it is impossible. Instead, I now work at striking the death-blow to the basic hatred which infests the human heart and causes such tragedies. And that hatred cannot be uprooted without assistance from Jesus Christ.

He is the only One Who was powerful enough to change my life and inspire it with His thoughts. He was the only answer to Jake DeShazer’s tormented life. He is the only answer for young people today.

Originally entitled, “From Pearl Harbor to Golgotha” (1953)



**Mitsuo Fuchida**  
**3 December 1902 – 30 May 1976**

Mitsuo Fuchida was a Japanese Captain in the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service and a bomber pilot in the Imperial Japanese Navy before and during World War II. He is perhaps best known for leading the first air wave attacks on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. Fuchida was responsible for the coordination of the entire aerial attack.

After World War II ended, Fuchida returned to his home village where he took up farming.

However his life took a dramatic change when he became a Christian after reading gospel tract. Such was the change that he went on to become an evangelist and spent the rest of his life in service to the Lord travelling throughout the World telling his story. Fuchida faithfully served Jesus Christ until his death in 1976 aged 73.



## '180' reaching the multitudes



Last issue, we ran a feature promoting the '180 Movie'. This 33-minute online movie went viral when it first appeared with 1 million views in the first 22 days. Currently, it has had 2.5 million views online, plus thousands of DVDs given away at Universities and schools throughout the US and overseas and more sold through their store.

It has been instrumental in helping to change the minds of people in regards to the sanctity of life. Although '180 Movie' deals primarily with saving and protecting the lives of the unborn, the message is broader, that all Human life is precious in the eyes of God. Not only has this message changed people's views in regards to abortion, it has been another resource for the furtherance of the Gospel.

For those who have already watched '180', why not consider buying it on DVD and sharing it with those around you. 10 DVDs can be bought for as little as \$15US through Living Waters' online store, which makes them cheap enough to give away. There is also a variety of other promotional material available to get the message out.

Go to [www.livingwaters.com](http://www.livingwaters.com) and click on the '180' logo for further information. For Australian readers, resources can be purchased from [www.onemilliontracts.com.au](http://www.onemilliontracts.com.au).

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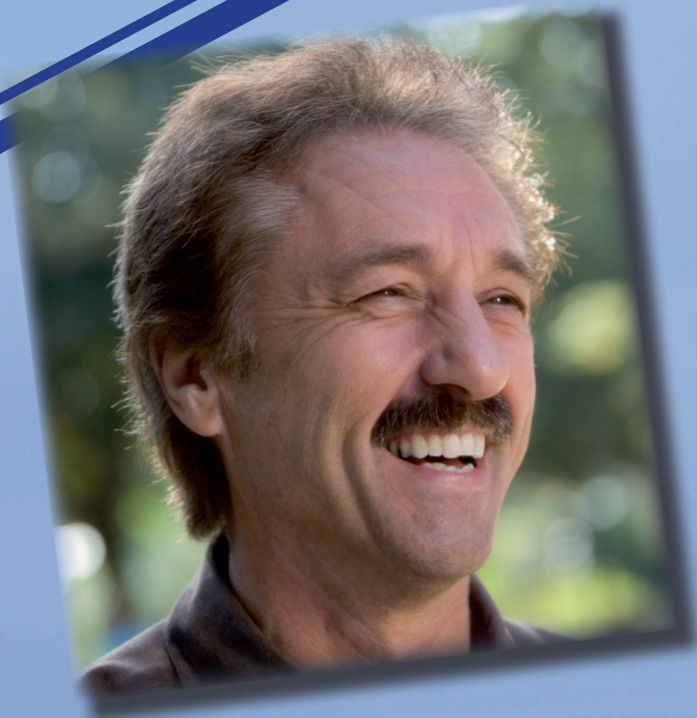
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MINISTRY PROFILE



# RAY COMFORT & THE LIVING WATERS STORY

## LIVING WATERS

INSPIRING and EQUIPPING Christians in FULFILLING the Great Commission



## ◆ Leah Knowing

In a world of superficiality and materialism, where even some of the church has conformed to this pattern, it is refreshing to find Christians and indeed whole ministries that are 'real' and 'down-to-earth'. Ray Comfort and Living Waters, based in California, USA, are one such example.

It was in early 2005 that Tim and I were first introduced to the ministry of Ray Comfort, when we heard one of his foundational messages called 'Hell's Best Kept Secret'.<sup>1</sup> It would be another year and a half before we again heard this life-changing message.

While this story is primarily highlighting Ray Comfort and his ministries, Living Waters and Way of the Master, I would first like to give an understanding of how hearing that one message once greatly impacted both of us. As it was this that introduced us to the rest of Ray's ministry.

This message, 'Hell's Best Kept Secret', which incidently is not about Hell, but about Evangelism, got us thinking and questioning what we preached and started us on our own journey of revelation through the scriptures, as the Lord convicted us of misquoting scriptures. In fact, the Lord further challenged us to rethink how we presented the Gospel and indeed what Gospel we presented.

So, in reality it was the Lord renewing our minds regarding the Word of God, not a man trying to sell us a new evangelism method that convicted us to change what we preached and how. (See sidebar story, 'What is the message we preach?' for further understanding.)

However, we were keen to find out what other 'bread' this ministry served - that is, what

other messages did they preach of the Word of God that would feed our spirit and challenge the soul, but not tickle our ears.

I have to say, we found much to 'feed' on. But, more on that later. Let me now rewind a few years and start at the beginning in, of all places, New Zealand.

Yes, Ray is a Kiwi. For the Aussies reading this, it may not be so surprising that one so down-to-earth would be from 'down under'. To our overseas readers, this is a just a little Aussie humour.

Living Waters, like many ministries and indeed businesses, started with humble beginnings. Over the years, it has grown quite considerably. However, as '60 Minutes' in New Zealand discovered when they interviewed Ray, despite what the world would view as success, this ministry and indeed Ray and his fellow labourers retain the same humble values with which they started.<sup>2</sup>

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**“**Someone saw the tract and ordered 5,000 copies. That was the humble beginning of our tract ministry, which now sells millions of tracts each year.”**”**

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Ray Comfort became a Christian in 1972. From that moment, he was radically transformed and had a God-given desire to see the lost saved. His mandate from the Lord, then and now has been to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

Just after his conversion, an elderly Christian gentleman came into his leather/surf shop (which he had begun a few years earlier) to congratulate him on his conversion. They became firm friends.

Ray shares, "One day [he] insisted that he buy me a \$90 "Gestetner" — a

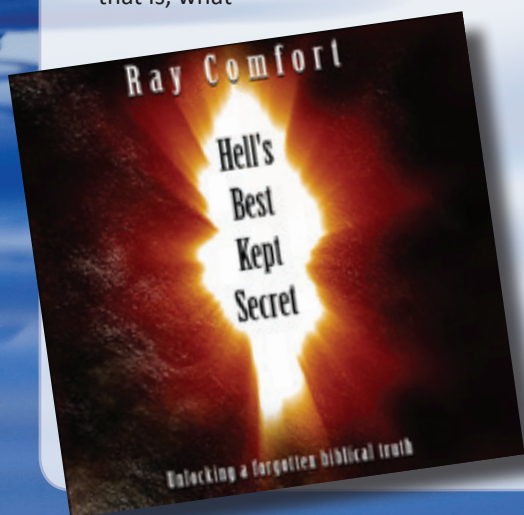


hand-cranking machine used for copying (before the photocopier became popular). I suppose the Lord was leading him, because I had no idea why he did that. I typed out a tract about the root cause of racial problems—that it was sin, not skin—and cranked out a hundred or so on the primitive Gestetner. Someone saw the tract and ordered 5,000 copies. That was the humble beginning of our tract ministry, which now sells millions of tracts each year.”<sup>3</sup>

Not long later, Ray was travelling on a bus, and as he looked closely at all his fellow travellers, thought, "Every one of them is going to die. How I wish I had the courage to stand up and tell them I have found the answer to death!" Coming from someone who feared public speaking, this was a brave request. But one that the Lord answered shortly thereafter through an area being designated in Christchurch called 'Speaker's Corner'.

After swallowing his fears, Ray started preaching there almost daily until they moved to the USA. Ultimately, over a period of 12 years, Ray spoke there over 3000 times, not to mention his open-air preaching in the US and overseas that still continues. Which just proves that what God calls you to, He will give you the grace to do.

It was during this time that some of the young drug addicts that he had met previously, and tried, unsuccessfully, to help rehabilitate, started dying. This prompted him to write an 8-page booklet entitled 'My Friends are Dying'.





From this humble little pamphlet began an itinerant ministry that took Ray across New Zealand speaking on the dangers of drug abuse and preaching the Gospel. This pamphlet also became a book and later an amateur movie.... all with the intention of promoting the Gospel.

It was during Ray's time as an itinerant preacher, when he was given access to church growth records, that he began to prepare the sermon 'Evangelical Frustration' (later renamed 'Hell's Best Kept Secret').

Ray had become frustrated as he saw hundreds and thousands 'coming to Christ', but then 80-90% of them 'falling away' from the faith, becoming what the church calls 'backsliders'.

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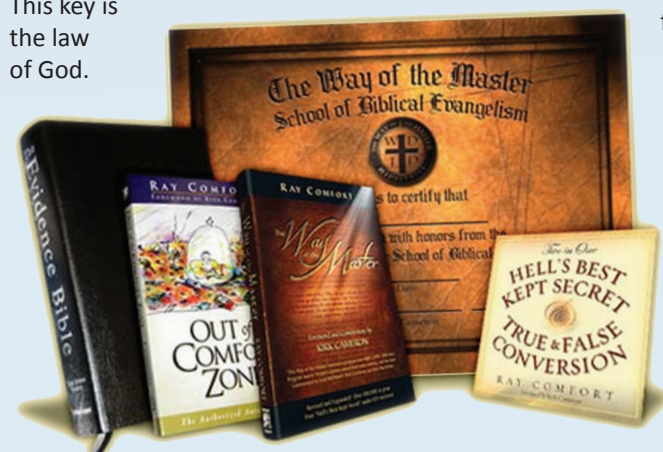
*“He discovered there was a key element in the ‘modern’ Gospel presentation missing.”*

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He questioned why this was happening. As he read the scriptures and what Jesus and the Apostles preached and the messages of godly men of the past, such as Charles Spurgeon, George Whitfield, DL Moody, AW Tozer, John Wesley, General Booth and others, he discovered there was a key element in the 'modern' Gospel presentation missing.

This key had been so grossly misused in the past, much of the church had disregarded it as irrelevant for today. However, it is this that Jesus used and Paul said 'brings the knowledge of sin' (Romans 3:19) which, though it doesn't save us, prepares the heart for the Gospel of God's grace.

This key is the law of God.



When the law is used in evangelism, to show a sinner their sin, God's righteous judgment makes sense and Hell seems deserving. But more than that, the Grace of God shown through Christ's sacrifice of His life on the cross, and the free gift of eternal life through faith in Him, becomes even more amazing when a sinner sees that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). The love of God shown in the cross when a sinner's conscience is convicted by the Holy Spirit, brings a sinner to true repentance and faith in the only One who can save us from the "wrath to come" (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

While Ray 'discovered' this key in evangelism in this generation, this is by no means a new 'method' nor 'his method' as it is backed by scripture and history. However, in this generation, in these last days, God is calling His church back to biblical Christianity and to fulfilling the Great Commission, and He will use anyone who will listen to Him.

With that in mind, it is no wonder that this message created mixed reactions amongst the church. Some felt it was new teaching or even preaching 'legalism' - neither of which is true; others received it like the breath of fresh air it is, amongst the superficiality of some of today's churches.

It was through this message, and the impact it had on those who heard it, that he was later invited to base himself and his family in the USA - a place that God would later use to bring the Gospel to the nations.

After receiving numerous confirmations from the Lord that this was His plan, Ray, along with wife, Sue and their three children, left their families, friends and ministry work in New Zealand and moved to California, USA in 1989.

Whilst speaking invitations were initially slow, Ray's love for the lost and the Lord compelled him to preach wherever possible.... and his first main 'fishing spot' was the infamous MacArthur Park, where they not



only preached the Gospel open-air, but also ministered to the physical needs of the lost and destitute in that place, through food distribution and medical aid.

However, eventually doors started to open and the message started to be spread. By this time, Ray had established Living Waters as his ministry base, whilst still open-air preaching, now at Huntington Beach. But when the famous Hollywood actor, Kirk Cameron, heard the message and contacted him, things really started to grow. God has a timing for everything.

Although Kirk had become a Christian some years before whilst acting in the TV sitcom, 'Growing Pains', when he heard Ray's message, 'Hell's Best Kept Secret', he was so impacted and inspired that he wanted to join Ray in his ministry to help equip the body of Christ with the tools to share their faith... biblically and effectively.

Ray and Kirk later started producing what would become an award-winning TV series called 'Way of the Master'. The cream of the TV series later led to an 8-week Evangelism Training Course, other courses, messages, over 70 books and their colourful and very effective Gospel tracts. (Regular readers would note that we have promoted a number of these resources in this magazine over time, as well as facilitated their courses in Australia.)

In 2001, Living Waters also set up an online Bible school called 'School of Biblical Evangelism' ([www.biblicalevangelism.com](http://www.biblicalevangelism.com)) which has now trained over 11,000 students. They have also run a full-time radio station and a daily 30-minute internet webinar called 'On the Box'.

More recently they produced a 33 minute documentary comparing abortion to the Holocaust, with a very clear Gospel message. This has been viewed on 'Youtube' over 2.5 million times and has already



impacted many lives, not only to change their views on abortion, but also with people turning to Christ after watching it. Like much of Living Waters products, it is available freely, and can be viewed on Youtube or by going to [www.180movie.com](http://www.180movie.com). (See page 11 for more details.)

With all of this success, one could think that Ray now also lives quite comfortably (pardon the pun). However, despite living in the materialistic capital of America, Bellflower, California (the home of Hollywood), as I said in the beginning, he and his ministry are very real and down-to-earth.

Ray, himself, only takes a small wage and doesn't even own a car, but rides a bicycle to work. On top of that, he and wife, Sue, still live in the same house they bought when they first came to the USA over 20 years ago. You will also find that their ministry gives away thousands upon thousands of CDs, DVDs and books every year, just so the Gospel can get into the hands of those who need to hear it the most. They are truly an inspiration of godly character.

A very witty man by nature, who uses humour to 'break the ice', so to speak, when witnessing, Ray is nonetheless humble and modest when it comes to talking about his so-called success and this same attitude permeates throughout their entire ministry.

Why? Because 'success in ministry' and 'growth' is not their main goal. Their main mission is to be faithful in serving the Lord and His Church by equipping the body of Christ for the work of the ministry to seek and save those who are lost. Everything else are just the tools God has given them to fulfil that task. And fulfil it, they do.

May the Lord continue to bless this ministry in all their endeavours for the Lord and, I pray, inspire each one of us to go and do likewise, that is to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15



For more information, please visit their website, [www.livingwaters.com](http://www.livingwaters.com)

#### Reference

1. You can listen to this life-changing message freely on the Living Waters website: [www.livingwaters.com](http://www.livingwaters.com)
2. 60 minutes interview 'Ray of Light' source: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
3. "Out of the Comfort Zone", Ray Comfort, (Bridge-Logos Publishers)

## WHAT IS THE MESSAGE WE PREACH?

Quite simply, we preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as Jesus, the Apostles and Paul did. When preaching or witnessing to an unbeliever, we give grace to the humble and law to the proud. If someone is humbled over their sin against God, as in the woman caught in adultery, then we would simply preach the love and grace of God as revealed in the cross. Unfortunately, most people we meet are proud in their heart and think they are a good person and that their goodness will make them right with God.

To these people our message includes the following, as the opportunity and time allows:

- The law to bring the knowledge of sin, opening up the Ten Commandments and the spiritual nature of the law (For example, see Matthew 5:27-28, where Jesus said that God considers lust to be adultery). The purpose of using the law is to stop their mouth from justifying their actions and leaves them guilty before God.
- The full nature of God - that He is not only a God of love, mercy and grace, but of justice, righteousness, judgement and holiness.
- That God, being in very nature Good, is just and must therefore punish sin and that He sees sin as so serious that His punishment is death and eternal judgement in hell.
- Some people at this point may think they can make up for their sin by doing more 'good works than bad ones'. To this we show them through scripture and analogy that you can not be made right with God by trying to keep a law you have already broken.
- As a sinner sees the serious nature of their sin against God and is humbled through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we then preach that God is also merciful and loving. Seeing our utter incapability of being made righteous by our own good works, He became the justifier of our faith through Christ's atoning death on the cross.
- We preach Jesus Christ's life, His sacrificial death in our place when His blood was shed on the cross at Calvary (which satisfied God's eternal judgement for sin), His burial and His resurrection, in which He conquered death, sin and the devil and proved that He had accomplished that for which He was sent.
- We preach repentance towards God (not just sorrow over sin, but a conscious turning away from it), and faith (ie. trust) in Jesus Christ and that "it is by grace you have been saved through faith - and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- That through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, we are made righteous (ie. right standing) with God and receive the gift of eternal life, through the Holy Spirit Who comes to live within us as a deposit, guaranteeing our inheritance.
- That those who are born again of the Holy Spirit (Who alone can save us), are new creatures in Christ with a new heart and new desires.
- We encourage those we speak to, to get right with God, either right then, or in their own time, and would warn them about the uncertainty of life and the terrible consequences if they die in their sins.
- If someone is convicted by the Holy Spirit and earnestly desires salvation, we invite them to pray to God in their own words, then we would pray for them. We encourage them to read their Bible (and will give them one if they don't have one, and would like one), to find a Bible-believing church and to seek after God in prayer.
- We then leave them with a Gospel tract and continue to pray for their salvation.

For further information and scripture references, please go to our website.

[www.soldiersofthecross.com.au](http://www.soldiersofthecross.com.au)





♦ Leah Knowling

**W**e read in Romans 12:16 and 1 Peter 3:8 (NIV) that we, meaning Christians, are meant to *“Live in Harmony with one another”*. Whilst the King James Version puts it as being of ‘one mind’ or ‘like-minded’, it is the word harmony, in the New International Version, that I would like to explore. I believe it brings out a depth of meaning to the text, that is otherwise missed.

So, what does it really mean to ‘live in harmony with one another’? What does the word ‘harmony’ mean and how can we live in it together?

Many people have attempted to explain the word ‘Harmony’ as tolerance or getting along with others or even being in unity or agreement. Now, these terms are certainly true. However, in this space I would like to bring out the musical side of the word, as ‘harmony’ (at least in this day and age) is primarily a musical term.

So, musically, what is ‘Harmony’?

Harmony is where two or more complementary notes are played or sung

simultaneously, as in a musical chord or ‘triad’. Whether it be in a quartet, a choir or an orchestra, the principle is the same.

Many voices or instruments all singing or playing a slightly different tune could sound dreadful on their own, but when played together, there is a unity that is created that makes the music sound like one voice or instrument. And that is the main goal of all the musicians and singers - to blend together, so as to sound like one.

I spent 13 years being part of choirs and a musical theatre group, 15 years being part of church worship teams, including 10 years as a worship leader and soloist and 8 years as a singing teacher. All of this experience has taught me the truth of harmony. I can still hear my first choir teacher’s constant cry to us in the choir stands, “Blend ..... I don’t want to hear individual voices .... Just one voice”. I have carried that truth with me, and taught it myself, for the past 30 years.

So, how does this apply to us spiritually? How can we live in harmony with one another?

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 talks about us being part of the body of Christ. Verse 12 says, *“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.”*

Verses 15-26 goes on to discuss how

our physical bodies have different parts each with different functions, but each of them need the others to make the body complete. No part of our physical bodies can survive on their own, nor could the whole body be made up of just one part. In essence, the physical body has harmony.

So it is with the body of Christ. God has given us all different gifts and abilities that complement each other and has given us different, but again complementary, parts to play together in the body of Christ.

On our own, outside the body of Christ, we wither - there are no ‘islands’ or Lone Rangers in God’s Kingdom. In fact, these only create divisions and strife and serve to destroy the body. Nor is everyone called to be a pastor or a prophet, as an example. Rather, we are called to work together for the common goal of fulfilling Christ’s Great Commission and ultimately bring glory to God.

*“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”* (Ephesians 4:16). It is only together, every member playing their particular part, that we can ever achieve this common goal.

As we strive daily to do this, we will find we are of ‘one mind’, living together ‘in harmony’.

*Living in Harmony*

[www.soldiersofthecross.com.au](http://www.soldiersofthecross.com.au)